Pradesh had sanctioned Rs. 14.18 crore to Bhopal Municipal Corporation for providing safe drinking water through pipe lines from the Kolar Reservoir to the 14 Localities situated around the former Union Carbide Plant Site. The Government of Madhya Pradesh was requested to take necessary measures for the medical, social, economic and environmental rehabilitation of the gas victims and their families. Further the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals had constituted a Coordination Committee under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary for effective implementation of the various ongoing Schemes/Programmes of the Central Government and the State Government of Madhya Pradesh for the welfare of the victims of Bhopal Gas Tragedy.

(c) The High Court of Madhya Pradesh at Jabalpur is hearing the Writ Petition No. 2802/ 2004, where Union of India is also a Respondent. The High Court had constituted a Task Force to monitor the process of environmental remediation at the former Union Carbide Plant Site at Bhopal. The matter is *sub-judice.*

(d) The CBI has informed that the extradition request for extradition of Warren Anderson was sent to the USA on 13.12.2002. The request was turned down by the USA Authorities saying that it failed to meet the requirements of article 2(i) and 9(iii) of the Extradition Treaty. The grounds on which the request was refused were examined by CBI and accordingly US authorities were requested to reconsider their decision. The matter is still pending with Ministry of External Affairs/US Authorities for execution.

(e) In the under trial case in Chief Judicial Magistrate's Courts, Bhopal, the prosecution evidence, statement of accused persons have been completed and presently the case is pending at the stage of Defence Evidence. Summons/warrants were issued by the court to enforce appearance of M/s Union Carbide Corporation. However, they did not appear before the court and were declared proclaimed offenders on 27.3.1992. As the company still did not appear before the court, the order for attachment of the 50.9% share of Union Carbide Corporation in Union Carbide India Limited was passed by the court on 30.4.92.

**Patents of AIDS drugs**

1584. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether HIV drugs to cost more as companies have started securing patents for drugs used to treat AIDS and related diseases;

(b) whether this will create a problem for around 2 million HIV patients in the country; and

(c) if so, what are the steps Government proposes to take to check the prices of drugs for HIV so that it is easily available to the patients?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) has informed that in case the Patents are granted on drugs used to treat AIDS and related diseases, the cost of drugs might increase significantly and this may create problems for HIV patients in the country. However, the Indian Patent Act has certain safe guards to handle such situations. Besides this, NACO procures ARV drugs in bulk through International Competitive Bidding (ICB) from WHO pre-qualified companies. This bulk purchase helps in getting quality drugs at competitive costs. In addition, NACO has entered into MOU with

UNITAID for free supply of ARV drugs for children and second line ARV drugs. All the drugs are given free to the patients.

**Circulation of banned pesticides and seeds**

1585. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some USA and Europe based agrochemical companies have had their products like pesticides and seeds banned in their own countries have found its way to India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons for allowing such products in the Indian market?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) As per information made available by the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation no isolated information is available that some USA and Europe based agro-chemical companies had their product like pesticide banned in their own countries have found its way to India. However, some pesticides, which are banned/severely restricted in other countries are permitted for use in our country. Their use has been permitted only after through reviews and satisfying that the particular pesticide does not pose harmful effect under the conditions of use in our country. Further, it is relevant to mention that the use of these pesticides is banned/restricted in one, two or few countries while their use is permitted in some other countries of the world. When it comes to the notice of the Government that a pesticide is banned in other country it gets the same reviewed for its continued use or otherwise in our country. Based on such reviews, 31 pesticides and their formulations have been banned Statement-I (*See* below) and 12 have been restricted for use in the country Statement-II (*See* below) . A list of pesticides banned/severely restricted in some other countries of the world but permitted for use in our country is at Statement-III (*see* below). The country permits the use of the insecticide based on its agro-climatic situations, crop pattern, geography, pest-disease-situation, ecology and socio-economic conditions.

As regards circulation of banned seeds, the information is that Bt. Cotton is the only genetically modified crop approved for commercial cultivation in India Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) of the Ministry of Environment & Forests, which is the competent authority under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. Bt. Cotton hybrids are under cultivation in nine States of the country namely Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. The area under Bt. Cotton has increased from 29,073 hectares in 2002-03 to 34.67 lakh hectares during 2006-07 which is about 37.69% of the total cotton area in the country.

The development of Bt. Cotton in USA set in motion the process for the cultivation of transgenic cotton. Bt. Cotton offers season long in plant protection against cotton's worst enemies — the bollworm complex of insects. Bt. Cotton is designed to reduce or eliminate the need to spray for bollworms. When bollworms feed on the Bt. Cotton plant, the Bt. Protein stops the larva from feeding further and causes its subsequent death. This self-defence system against bollworms help farmers manages these pests in an effective manner with minimum use of chemicals. Bt. Cotton, however, does not control sucking pests. Bt. Cotton holds promise for enhancing cotton production.